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PLANE FLIGHTS

WASHINGTON-(AP)-THE U.S. AIR FORCE WILL CONTINUE TO FLY ITS WORLDWIDE MISSIONS DESPITE RUSSIA'S SHOOTING CHALLENGE TO THE USE OF AIR SPACE OVER INTERNATIONAL WATERS OF THE NORTH PACIFIC.

THAT WAS THE WORD WHICH TOP PENTAGON SPOKESMEN GAVE OUT AFTER THEIR STUDY OF REPORTS ON THE FIRST CONFIRMED TWO-WAY FIGHT BETWEEN U.S. AND RED MILITARY PLANES OUTSIDE THE KOREAN WAR ZONE.

MILITARY OFFICIALS WHO MAY NOT BE NAMED ALSO LET IT BE KNOWN THAT THE PENTAGON HAD TALKED DOWN A STATE DEPARTMENT SUGGESTION TO POSTPONE ANY PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE INCIDENT.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD THE BARE FACTS OF THE KAMCHATKA CLASH EARLY MONDAY, IT WAS LEARNED, AND ADVISED CAUTION IN ANNOUNCING THE EVENT BECAUSE NEITHER THE ATTACKING MIG-15 NOR THE DEFENDING U.S. B-50 SUFFERED HUMAN CASUALTIES OR ANY APPARENT DAMAGE. THE LINE OF REASONING OF SOME DIPLOMATS RAN LIKE THIS:

1. SILENCE BY WASHINGTON MIGHT HELP TO SMOKE OUT RUSSIAN INTENTIONS.
2. PUBLICITY COULD WEAKEN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE STRONG U.S. AND BRITISH PROTESTS IN RECENT DAYS OVER THE UNOPPOSED SHOOTING DOWN OF TWO ALLIED AIRCRAFT OVER GERMANY.

THE PENTAGON WON THE DECISION TO ANNOUNCE THE KAMCHATKA AFFAIR YESTERDAY AFTER MAINTAINING THE MILITARY VIEW THAT IT WOULD BE BETTER TO GET OUT THE FACTUAL STORY BEFORE MOSCOW COULD USE A PERVERTED VERSION FOR PROPAGANDA PURPOSES OR TO EXERT DIPLOMATIC PRESSURE.

JC951A 3/18